General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 110

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/574)*]

56/119. Role, function, periodicity and duration of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders

The General Assembly,

Recalling that, in its resolution 53/110 of 9 December 1998, it requested the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to review the role, function, periodicity and duration of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, including the issue of regional preparatory meetings for the congresses,

Taking note with appreciation of the results of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders,[1]

Bearing in mind that the congresses are a consultative body of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in accordance with paragraph 29 of the statement of principles and programme of action of the Programme, annexed to General Assembly resolution 46/152 of 18 December 1991,

Recognizing the significant contributions of the congresses to the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice,

Recognizing also that the congresses have been a forum for promoting the exchange of experiences in research, law and policy development and the identification of emerging trends and issues in crime prevention and criminal justice among States, intergovernmental organizations and individual experts representing various professions and disciplines,

Recognizing further the role played by the congresses in preparing suggestions, for consideration by the Commission, on possible subjects for its programme of work,

Aware of the need to review the functioning and method of work of the congresses in order to improve their effectiveness,

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[1] See *Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Vienna, 10–17 April 2000: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.IV.8).

Noting with appreciation the offers made by the Governments of Mexico and Thailand to host the next congress,

1. *Decides* to continue holding the United Nations congresses in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of the statement of principles and programme of action of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme,[2] following a dynamic, interactive and cost-effective method of work and a focused programme of work, and to call them the United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice;

2. *Also decides* that, beginning in 2005, the congresses, pursuant to paragraphs 29 and 30 of the statement of principles and programme of action of the Programme, shall be held in accordance with the following guidelines:

(*a*) Each congress shall discuss specific topics, including, where appropriate, a main topic, all of which shall be determined by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice;

(*b*) Each congress shall include one session of pre-congress consultations;

(*c*) Each congress shall include a high-level segment in which States will be represented at the highest possible level and will be given an opportunity to make statements on the topics of the congress;

(*d*) As part of the high-level segment, the heads of delegations or their representatives shall participate in a number of thematic interactive round tables in order to further the discussion on the topics of the congress through open dialogue;

(*e*) Panels of experts, to be selected by the Commission with due regard for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, shall hold workshops dealing with the topics of the congress, maintaining an open dialogue with the participants and avoiding the reading of statements;

(*f*) Institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network shall be invited to assist in the preparations for the workshops;

(*g*) The Secretary-General shall facilitate, within existing resources, the organization of ancillary meetings of non-governmental organizations and professional organizations at each congress;

(*h*) Each congress shall adopt a single declaration containing recommendations derived from the deliberations of the high-level segment, the round tables and the workshops, to be submitted to the Commission for its consideration;

(*i*) Any action suggested to the Commission regarding its programme of work, contained in the declaration of the congress, shall be undertaken through individual resolutions of the Commission;

(*j*) The Commission, as the preparatory body for the congress, shall request the Secretary-General to prepare only those background documents which are absolutely necessary for implementing the programme of work of the congress;

[2] Resolution 46/152, annex.

(*k*) Each congress shall be preceded by regional preparatory meetings, when necessary, and the costs of the regional preparatory meetings for each congress shall be streamlined by holding them in conjunction with other regional meetings, shortening their duration and limiting the preparation of background documents;

3. *Requests* the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to continue to act as the preparatory body for the congresses and to follow the guidelines contained in paragraph 2 above in organizing future congresses;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the staff required to serve as secretariat for the congresses and the regional preparatory meetings for the congresses;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Centre for International Crime Prevention of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention of the Secretariat with the necessary resources, within the overall appropriations of the programme budget for the biennium 2002–2003, for the preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and to ensure that adequate resources are provided in the programme budget for the biennium 2004–2005 to support the holding of the Eleventh Congress;

6. *Requests* the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to formulate, at its eleventh session, recommendations regarding the Eleventh Congress, including recommendations on the main topic, the organization of round tables and workshops to be held by panels of experts and the venue and duration of the Eleventh Congress, and to submit those recommendations, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session;

7. *Also requests* the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to formulate, at its eleventh session, appropriate recommendations to enable the Economic and Social Council to introduce the necessary amendments to the rules of procedure for the congresses to reflect the guidelines contained in paragraph 2 above;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the proper follow-up to the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly, through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its eleventh session.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001